ABSTRACT

A method of forwarding data packets in a network device having an operating system. The method includes forwarding a data packet at the device driver layer in the network device without the operating system performing context switching in conjunction with forwarding the data packet. In another embodiment, a method of forwarding data packets in a network device having an operating system includes initiating a switching microdriver to retrieve a data packet, and forwarding the data packet to or from the switching microdriver without involvement of the operating system.